

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

BRIAN SCHWEITZER
GOVERNOR



JOHN BOHLINGER
LT. GOVERNOR

March 21, 2012

The Honorable James Sensenbrenner
Chairman
Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and
Homeland Security
House Judiciary Committee
B-370B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Louie Gohmert
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and
Homeland Security
House Judiciary Committee
B-370B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Sensenbrenner and Ranking Member Gohmert,

I write in strong opposition to the REAL ID Act.

In 2005, I signed a law forbidding Montana from complying with REAL ID (MCA 61-5-128). This law stated that Montana found the REAL ID to be *"inimical to the security and well-being of the people of Montana, will cause unneeded expense and inconvenience to those people, and was adopted by the U.S. congress in violation of the principles of federalism contained in the 10th amendment to the U.S. constitution."*

Montana objects to the implementation of REAL ID for a number of reasons, the most important of those being its threat to our privacy rights which are enshrined in our 1972 Constitution. The so-called national identity verification hub, and the arbitrary demand that Montanans show a "REAL ID compliant document" before boarding a commercial flight or entering a federal building, are direct threats to Montanans' individual rights and privacy.

Montana will not agree to share its citizens' personal and private information through a national database, nor bear the exorbitant cost building such a database. Furthermore, the Act tramples on our state's right to determine our own licensing procedures and protocols, and would interfere with our state's work to improve drivers' license security.

Montana is in no mood at all for another heavy-handed play by the federal government, such as what transpired in 2008 when the homeland security director threatened to prevent Montanans from boarding an airplane unless we complied with the REAL ID act. We refused, and will refuse again.

While folks in Washington may have believed they knew what was best for Montana when they created the REAL ID Act, in fact, Montanans have little use for this unpopular, unfunded, and completely unfeasible mandate. The House Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security should use today's hearing to begin the process of repealing the REAL ID Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Schweitzer".

BRIAN SCHWEITZER
Governor